

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 09008 261554Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, GR, TU

SUBJECT: REACTION TO DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AEGEAN DISPUTE

REF: (A) ATHENS 8951, (B) ATHENS 8964 (NOTAL)

1. THE APPROVAL BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) OF THE
RESOLUTION ON THE AEGEAN DISPUTE BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY
WAS THE FEATURE STORY IN THE GREEK PRESS TODAY
(AUGUST 26). THE PRESS GENERALLY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION
WITH THE UNSC ACTION, AND A MEASURE OF MILD OPTIMISM THAT
FUTHER PROGRESS COULD NOW BE MADE TOWARDS ACHIEVING A
RESOLUTION OF THE AEGEAN DISPUTE WAS EVIDENT THROUGHOUT
THE REPORTING. HOWEVER, PRO-PASOK ATHINAIKI AND ULTRA-
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CONSERVATIVE ESTIA WERE AN EXCEPTION TO THIS, WITH BOTH

SAYING THE APPEAL TO THE UNSC AND THE RESOLUTION GAVE TURKEY A SAY WITH RESPECT TO GREECE'S SOVEREIGN RIGHTS.

2. GOVERNMENT SUPPORTERS HAILED THE RESOLUTION'S PASSAGE AS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE VALIDITY OF THE GOG'S PEACEFUL POLICIES, WITH PRO-GOVERNMENT ACROPOLIS CALLING IT A "PERSONAL VICTORY" FOR PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS. OTHER NEWSPAPERS PLACED GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE NEXT STEPS, STRESSING THAT THE PATH WAS NOW OPEN FOR SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY. IN THIS REGARD, THE MEETING IN NEW YORK BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTERS BITSIOS AND CAGLAYANGIL WAS DESCRIBED IN POSITIVE TERMS, AND MENTION WAS MADE THAT BOTH WOULD SEEK TO AGREE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS ON A TIME AND PLACE FOR THE NEW PHASE OF BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. THE NEWS STORIES CONTAIN SOME DETAILS SURROUNDING THE UNSC'S MEETING LAST EVENING, INCLUDING SUMMARIES OF THE ADDRESSES OF THOSE SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WHO SPOKE, AS WELL AS OF THE FINAL STATEMENTS BY THE GREEK AND TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTERS.

3. PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS' STATEMENT (REF B) EXPRESSING GREECE'S SATISFACTION WITH THE RESOLUTION AND THE INTENT OF HIS COUNTRY TO "RESPOND TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL" RECEIVED WIDE PLAY. CARAMANLIS AGAIN DENIED "THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT HAS... ASSERTED... THAT THE AEGEAN IS A CLOSED GREEK SEA". HE EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT TURKEY AS WELL WILL COMPLY WITH THE UNSC RECOMMENDATIONS "SO THAT AN HONEST AND SERIOUS DIALOGUE MAY BECOME POSSIBLE", PLEDGING THAT "GREECE IS READY TO HOLD THIS (DIALOGUE) AT ANY LEVEL". IN CONCLUSION, CARAMANLIS NOTED "THE MOMENT IS HISTORICALLY CRUCIAL FOR BOTH PEOPLES". IT MAY BE THE BEGINNING OF PEACEFUL EXISTENCE AND FRUITFUL COOPERATION IN THE AREA, OR IT MAY MARK THE STARTING POINT OF IRREPARABLE DISASTERS IF THE LEADERS OF BOTH COUNTRIES FAIL TO BE AWARE OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, HE CONCLUDED.

4. REACTION BY THE OPPOSITION WAS ALSO WIDELY CARRIED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ATHENS 09008 261554Z

IN THE MEDIA, WITH GEORGE MAVROS, LEADER OF THE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION CENTER OF THE DEMOCRATIC UNION PARTY, ALONE IN REFRAINING FROM MAKING AN INITIAL COMMENT. (MAVROS REPORTEDLY WILL ISSUE A STATEMENT LATER TODAY.) THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR (KKE-INTERIOR) OBSERVED THAT THE RESOLUTION WAS "A POSITIVE STEP, TAKEN DESPITE THE PERSISTENT EFFORTS TO THE CONTRARY BY THE TURKISH

DELEGATION", WHILE AT THE SAME TIME POINTING TO THE NEED FOR A READJUSTMENT OF GREECE'S FOREIGN POLICY. IN PATRAS, ILIAS ILIOU OF THE SMALL UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT (EDA) TOLD REPORTERS OF HIS GENERAL APPROVAL OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY. PASOK LEADER ANDREAS PAPANDREOU CHARACTERISTICALLY, AND CONSISTENT WITH THE POSITION HE HAS ADOPTED ON THE ISSUE, REACTED NEGATIVELY SAYING THAT HIS WORST FORECASTS HAD BEEN REALIZED SINCE THE UNSC, "FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS OF THE U.S. AND WITH SOVIET SUPPORT", HAD TREATED AGGRESSIVE TURKEY AND GREECE, WHICH CLAIMS ONLY ITS NATIONAL TERRITORY, ON THE SAME TERMS. HE DEMANDED THAT THE GOG EXPLAIN TO THE PEOPLE WHAT TURKEY WOULD GIVE GREECE IN NEGOTIATIONS, UNDERLINED THAT THE RESOLUTION HAD NOT STOPPED THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SISMİK I AND ALLUDED TO THE DANGER THAT THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (ICJ) MAY ALSO TAKE UP THE ISSUE OF THE DEMILITARIZATION OF THE AEGEAN ISLANDS. THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR'S ORGAN RIZOSPASTIS EDITORIALY LABELLED THE RESOLUTION AS USEFUL BECAUSE IT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED AS A STEP TOWARDS A SOLUTION OF THE AEGEAN PROBLEM. THE EDITORIAL PRAISED THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE USSR CONCERNING THE RESOLUTION.

5. IN RELATED ITEMS, THE MEDIA ALSO REPORTED THE OPENING DAY EVENTS AT THE ICJ HEARING ON THE AEGEAN DISPUTE, NOTING THE OFFICIAL ABSENCE OF TURKISH REPRESENTATIVES. THE REPORTS COMMENTED THAT THE PRESENT HEARING MAY LAST THROUGH FRIDAY WITH THE COURT'S OPINIONS ON SOME OF THE PROVISIONAL MEASURES REQUESTED BY GREECE POSSIBLY COMING WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, ALTHOUGH THE TURKISH SIDE HAS INDICATED IT WOULD NOT BE BOUND BY THESE OPINIONS. THE LETTER TO UNSYG WALDHEIM FROM GREEK UN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 ATHENS 09008 261554Z

PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE AMBASSADOR PAPOULIAS ON THE QUESTION OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF RECEIVED SOME COVERAGE. THERE WERE A FEW REPORTS CLAIMING THE "MARCH ON ANKARA", IN PROTEST AGAINST ALLEGED GREEK MALTREATMENT OF THE TURKISH MINORITY IN WESTERN THRACE, HAD FIZZLED. THERE WAS ALSO SCATTERED MENTION OF CONTINUED TURKISH CLAIMS TO THE AEGEAN ISLANDS, THAT SISMİK I MIGHT BE BACK IN THE AEGEAN WITHIN A WEEK OR SO FOLLOWING INSTALLATION OF NEW EQUIPMENT IN IZMİR AND THAT THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE HAS BEEN CALLED FOR A CLOSED SESSION DISCUSSION ON THE AEGEAN CRISIS. KUBISCH

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